

Photographer Alleges Copyright Infringer Used Unauthorized Photo For Road Atlas And, When Caught, Offered \$10 As Compensation

Article By:

Intellectual Property

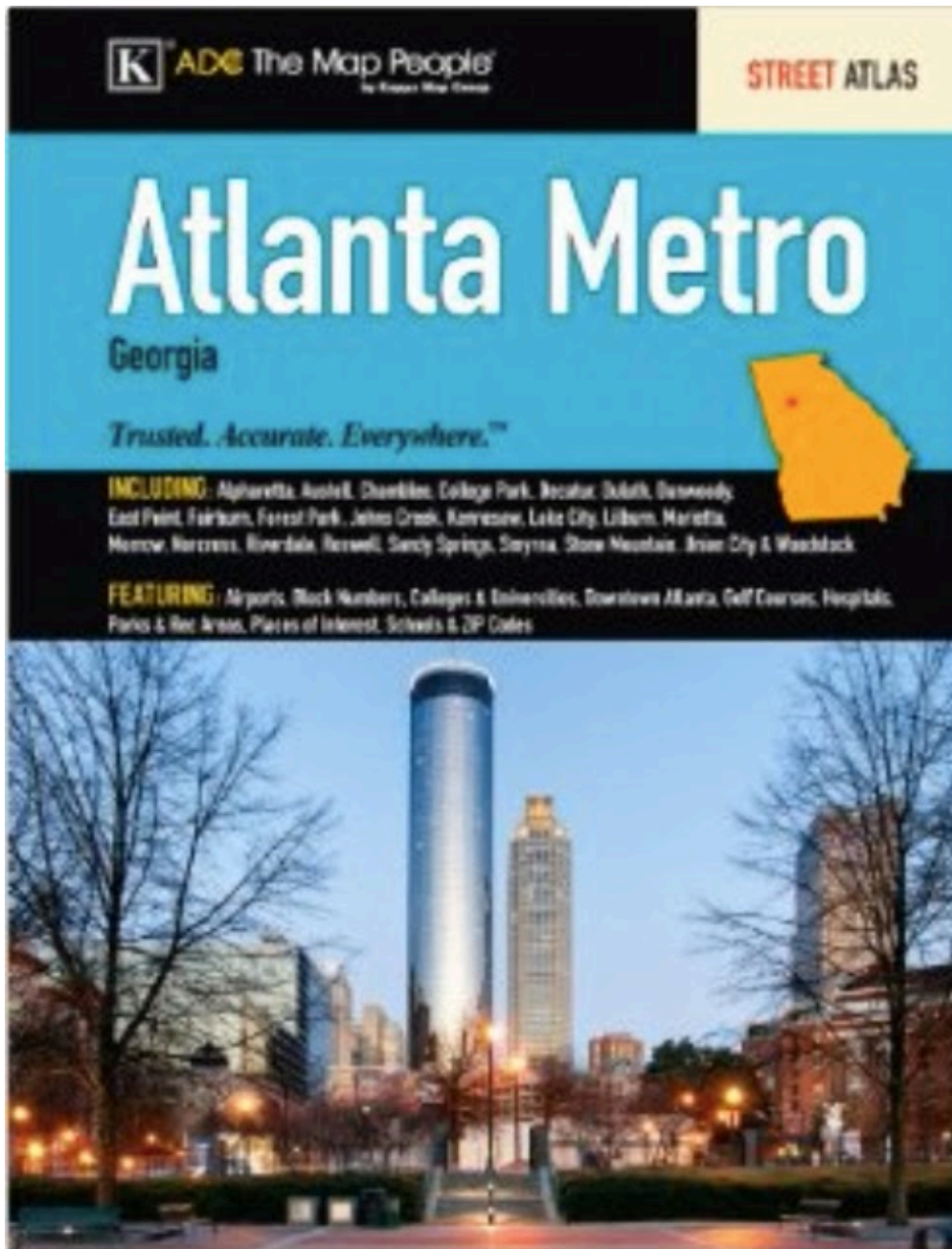
On February 11, 2011, Atlanta real estate and architectural photographer, Iran Watson (“Watson”), created a photograph of the Atlanta skyline that he entitled “Atlanta Westin Towers Twilight.” As alleged and shown in his complaint, Watson took the precaution of adding a digital watermark to the photo containing his name and providing notice of his copyright. The image of the photo, included in the complaint, is presented below.



According to the complaint, Watson posted the photo soon thereafter with the embedded digital information on his Flickr® photostream noting that it was protected by copyright and all rights were reserved. Thereafter, Watson registered the work with the US Copyright Office on February 13,

2013, and [registration number VA 1-859-387](#) was assigned to the work.

Four months later, in June 2013, Watson observed an Atlanta road map publication by Kappa Map Group, LLC (“Kappa”), bearing his photo on the cover. Kappa noted the the embedded information regarding copyright ownership was not included on the image. That image is reprinted in part below.



Watson alleges that he had not given Kappa permission to use his image and when he contracted them regarding their unauthorized use, they offered to pay him \$10 for the use of the photo. Thereafter, Watson secured counsel and brought his complaint for copyright infringement pursuant to 17 U.S.C. § 501 and removal of copyright management information pursuant to 17 U.S.C. § 1202(b). For relief, Watson seeks an injunction, a product recall, impounding, actual and statutory damages, attorney fees, and other relief.

The case is *Iran Watson v. Kappa Map Group LLC*, No. 1:14-cv-00100-WBH, filed 01/13/14 in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Georgia, Atlanta Division, and has been assigned to U.S. District Judge Willis B. Hunt, Jr.

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